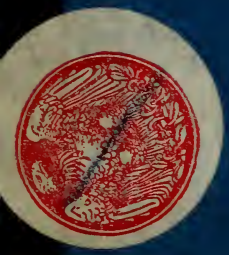
Mystic Songs of Flame and Fire



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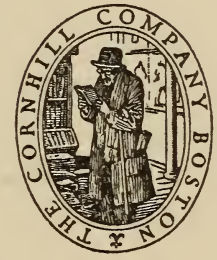
MYSTIC SONGS OF FIRE AND FLAME

MYSTIC SONGS
OF
FIRE AND FLAME

K. ARTHUR-BEHENNA
Author of "Love Victorious"

With an Appreciation by
STANWOOD COBB



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FOREWORD

What is inspiration? Plato describes it in Phædrus as a frenzy seizing the artist, similar to the frenzy which seized the Delphic priestesses when they gave their prophecies. Now the priestess of Apollo prophesied under the control of the god she served. Did Plato mean to indicate that the artist produces his art work under a similar control?

The subject of artistic inspiration is approached from a new point of view in this day of fast multiplying books of poetry and of prose purporting to be written automatically. Almost every publishing house now contains such books on its list, and the reading public has long since been convinced of the sincerity of such output, which it first viewed incredulously. A certain style characterizes all such writing—a potent fluency running often into garrulousness, often into turgidness that is almost opaque. At its *best* such writing is exquisitely beautiful.

The same unearthly beauty characterizes the style of one who writes under drug stimulation, as De Quincy and Coleridge; of alcoholics, such as Poe, of so-called insane people, and of people under a powerful religious inspiration. The Suras of Mohammed—illiterate camel driver feeling himself inspired by the Angel Gabriel— had a beauty so potent as to become the criterion for style in all subsequent Arabic literature. Blake, with his strange mystic mutterings, coming also from an angel as he maintained, is another example to the

point; also his drawings, considered by many as marvelous in their power of delineation. The writer knows a child of fourteen who draws and paints under inspiration, producing an art-work exquisitely beautiful and technically perfect as fast as her pencil and brush will work. She tells her mother that she does not like to be praised for her achievements because it is not herself, but angels who do it for her.

Is there any true artist who claims his work as his own? Does one not feel always that one is merely a medium for beauty to be poured out into a world of darkness and of sorrow? From what source one knows not. Call it Apollo, or the Muses; call it the Angel Gabriel; call it spirits of the departed; call it the subconscious self,—it matters not what name is given, the phenomenon is the same in any case. *It is not the conscious self which creates the beauty of art.*

Shall we say, then, that there is a strange realm into which the artist-soul ventures, sub-conscious to the reason, from which are brought back argosies of beauty to glorify our earth-dull hours? Do the artist, the seer, the prophet, mount to higher planes of being on the wings of inspiration, and perceive wonders which are unperceived of common mortals? Joseph Stillman, founder of osteopathy, credits the discovery to the spirit of the ancient Greek physician, Æsculapius, who showed him in a dream this strange new method of healing. So with many discoveries and inventions. Primitive tradition, indeed, ascribes all the inventions of civilization to the gods.

Does the other world, then, infringe upon this one—and are mortals able at times to penetrate the Abodes of Bliss and bring back essences of knowledge?

And now to this strange list of automatically-inspired writings is added this little volume, "Mystic Songs of Flame and Fire." The author has preferred hitherto to write under a nom-de-plume, John Prendregeist, meaning "to grasp the spirit." So the builders of medieval cathedrals wrought their beauty anonymously. One's message then is pure and from the sky—and free from human personality.

These poems came to the author under auditory control—spoken as it were to the inner ear, word by word. I love them for their beauty, as I love also his sequence of sonnets, "Love Triumphant," written in the same way, and fiery with a beauty such as the laboring mortal pen never can achieve. Like William Blake, this author, also, paints under inspiration strange mystic pictures to illuminate the poems and other thoughts.

But it is not only beauty of a scintillating, helion quality that these poems convey. A message lies concealed in them—which may or may not be apparent to the reader. Poetry is such a wonderfully protecting medium. It saves one from casting one's pearls before swine. Prose must say its message and stand challenge for its truth, but poetry, especially the mystic kind, escapes challenge. Those readers who are not of its kind do not understand it—and are consequently unable to deride its teaching. Those who are prepared in heart drink in the truths

as a thirsty plant absorbs moisture and food. Therefore Christ spoke in parables and said, "Ho ye, every one that thirsteth, come ye and drink, without money and without price."

There are many who are today thirsting for a solution to sex. May such read and perceive the message herein conveyed by an inspired poet—a teaching of love fit for the New Day that is approaching.

STANWOOD COBB.

PRELUDE

Some souls there are which feed on work, some live in thought alone.
But some at once to fountain-head of Love are ever drawn.
Love is the hidden motive power which drives the world along,
Love is the breath of tree and flower and gives the birds their song:
Love hath its heights and hath its depths which space could never span,
Love is the golden key of life, which God hath given to man.
Love is the golden ladder hung between the earth and heaven,
Love is the Crown the Victor wears, when self, from spirit's riven.

THE MYSTERY

It is not that thy lips are not most dear
And fill my clamouring body with delight.
It is not that apart from thee I walk
In shadows gray, which shut thee from my sight.
It is not that the pulsing blood which flows
In fiery jets, would leap, dear one, to thee
Like jewelled rain from some mysterious source,
Wert thou mine own and I, dear one, were free.
It is not this which tells me I will love
Thy form, thy face, thine eyes, thine every move.
Ah, more than this, it is thy soul which calls,
And bids me all my passioned manhood prove.
It is thy soul which meets me on the verge
Of some deep joy, forgotten, long ago,
And all my senses grope and strive for light
To learn the *Why*, to question and to know.
Perchance the day will come when I will leap
O'er every bar, and draw thee to my side
And shall absorb and hold thy very self,
A second Adam *by love deified.*

THE CHAUNT OF THE ELECTRIC MATE

Finger on lip I listen
For call of the Splendid One:
Was it the note of heron
Which pipes to the dying sun?
I lean again and listen,
The beat of my heart is loud,
Was it the wind which trembled
And through the pale leaves soughed?
The wan mist from the sedges
Rises in white amaze,
The night hath yet no darkness,
The moon with light is ablaze.
Lie still, O heart, in silence;
Art panting? Nay, hist, await.
Why do I bend and listen,
Am I not his long-sought mate?
In pathways dark he sought me,
Yea, in the deeps of hell,
Soiled his lips with their fruitage;
In loves that were lusts, he fell.
Now freed, he walks triumphant
With splendour and light around,
By the law of Love and Light
Are body and Spirit crowned.
One fetter yet unloosened
Doth hold him apart from me.
Bolt of the gods can sunder,
For Scions of light are free.

Ah! Hark, I hear
With joy and fear,
His loud exultant cry,
My soul doth quake,
Yet pants to slake
His thirst, I fly, I fly.
He seeks, he calls,
My heart enthralls,
My flying footsteps creep
And pangs of love
And throbs of joy
In billows o'er me sweep.
He comes, he calls,
He seizes me,
I faint within his hold.
And loud he chants
His song of love,
My soul he doth enfold.

"Lean to me, Love me,
Lover and wife,
Thou body and soul of me,
Clasp me and crown me,
Bind thee around me,
Slake my thirst in thee.
Lift me and lead me,
Feed me, I need thee,
Mate of my love and life.
Lave me and bathe me,
Yea, consecrate me,
Crown me, thou God-given wife.

Embrace me, encase me,
Seek me and keep me
In curve of thine arm enfold.
Breathe me and weave me,
Guide me and shrive me,
Spirit so subtle-souled.
Loosen thy flame,
With roseate shame,
Blend now thy white desire
Cleave thee, receive me,
Fill me and still me
In thy tumultuous fire."

Pale with the glory of love
I draw from out his arms,
My heart, like a pallid ghost
Raps faint its bursting alarms.
But my soul hath found its mate
Severed long æons ago,
My blood with sudden burst
Spouts into fiery flow,
My limbs, now weak like water,
Are from nuptial robe unveiled.
With waves of hot-blood rapture
The citadel is assailed.
Prone in my wild endeavour
To fly from his grasp, I fall.
My heart all sapped with weakness
My footsteps again enthrall.
Mouth to mouth now fastened
Tumultuous heave of breast

Passion of sweet surrender
And love is at last confest.
Yea, lip to lip impassioned
In a kiss of flame and fire
My beloved slakes his thirst
In the well of his desire!
Now limb with limb entwining
Through our earth-forms glad and warm,
A passage for birth of gods!
A channel of love we form.
"Crown of my flaming spirit
Proud wife in thy glad bestowal."
His words surge through my senses;
"Mate of my thund'rous soul!"
Anguish ecstatic fills me
And glory of perfect love
Eyes of my lord above me
Glow like the suns above.
Now breath of his seeking lips
Like a simoon sweeps my breast,
And lips to lips are cleaving
In ardour of joy o'er-prest.
Filled with new life electric
Are our earth-forms blent in one,
And the glory of our union
Thrills up to the blood-red sun.

I am the mate electric
The well of my love's desire,
Rosy and amber the incense,
On which our flames aspire.

O'er arid wastes of desert
My soul hath made its moan,
Through years of bitter heart-pain
My pillow I pressed alone,
Like torch aloft now flaming
When fanned by wind into life,
Kindled by love's adoration,
Fanned into flame by love's strife.
Naught in the world existent
But hath its electric mate;
Lust of the senses only
Corrodes to anguish and hate.
Lord of my soul and breathing,
Life of my spirit's flame
Blent in ecstatic flashings
With currents of love the same.

Bells of melody! Ring and swing!
Towering trees of might
Fling out thy laughter, happy laughter,
Eaglets arrest thy flight!
Moon of desire, shine with white fire
Of sun which flames the skies,
Fountains now spout, cataracts shout,
Billows of ocean arise!
Stars with thy nebulæ,
Clouds in thy white array,
Pulse into lightnings glad,
Storms in the valleys,
Marshal thine allies,
Race with tornadoes mad!
Heart-frozen hail

Beating like flail
On breast of the icy earth:
Kissed by the sun
Thy life-blood's run
Spring is caressed into birth.
I sing thy song,
Electric mate,
Of Earth and Sea and Sky.
The gods above,
Fulfill their love,
Nor flame doth pale and die.
'Tis the purple cup,
Th' imperial cup,
The nectar of love divine.
'Tis wine of life
And wine of soul,
The gods' celestial wine!
Bathe in it,
Lave in it,
Chaunt thy song,
Wife of thy soul's desire,
Up through the gates of Agni burst
On love's electric fire!
Up through the gates of Agni burst
Thy spirits laced in one
With bodies blent
Where warm earth lent
A couch 'neath skies and sun.
Up through the gates
Of Agni burst
And there thy song shall break
Love liquid pearls

In golden swirls
And radiant splendours make!
Up through the gates
Of Agni burst
Wing thy roulade of joy,
Nor power in earth
Nor heaven nor hell
That bond shall now destroy.
Leaping, dashing,
Pulsing, flashing
A madrigal of light:
Twisting, turning,
Twining, swirling,
In palpitating flight.
Gods inscrutable,
Powers indisputable,
Shout in pæans loud.
While Elohim great
Silently wait,
(Veiled in a shining cloud).
Till man and mate
Flash through the gate
Of God's effulgent source;
Blent in one flame,
No longer twain
On their triumphant course.

THE BRIDEGROOM

The Chaunt of the Freed Man

I come with the chaunt
Of giant free
From seal and curse of death,
I pour out my voice
In battle song
It mounts on living breath.
Lo, the sun of peace
And pow'r of love
Flash through my windowed soul,
I have climbed and fought
And vanquished fear:
Love is the freedman's goal!
For love is life
And sin is death
The freed man's self erect,
All that would darken
His inner sun
Triumphant will reject.
I pour out my song
With passion pure
I call "my love" to thee
Wert thou dead, thou'dst rise
And bring thy soul
To soul of him now free.
For the master-soul,
Who carries life
As crown upon his brow
Is the man on whom
Pure woman-soul

Her glory will bestow.
I shout with the joy
Of glad new life
My blood with laughter leaps
And up through my veins,
Clamour of love
With mighty passion sweeps.
Phallus no longer
Befouled with mire
Doth leap erect for thee,
Thou soul of my soul,
Conjoined through light,
Destined alone for me.
Like a king I storm
The haunts of men
I claim my homage proud.
As a god I walk
The realms of earth
Veiled in the inner shroud
Of a light which bursts
Through glowing flesh
Like flame of setting sun,
While fiery jets
Of passioned love
Through soul and body run.
And the love that my love
Doth bear to me
Hath dowered me with might,
Now free from the soil
Of earth I stand,
A god, illumed with light!
I chaunt the song

Of Phallus pure
The gift of Jah divine;
The symbol of life,
Mere outward form
Smiling, the gods resign.
Soul of the freed man
Walking the earth
(Channel I now become)
And a race of gods
Descends to us
The world with wonder dumb!
For the love is life
Phallus the sign,
Symbol of Jah's decree
That only through life
And light and love
The soul of man is free.
"Jet out thy semen,
Fiery soul,
Clasp thy wife in thine arms,
Love is immortal
And *lust* is death
Creeping, it slimes and harms!"

"Ah! Mouth unto mouth,
My love, my life,
Thou bone and breath of me;
And again, again,
I draw thee close
I pour myself in thee.
For power and love
And light and might

Are harnessed in the soul
Of the man and mate,
Who reach the gate
Of God's effulgent goal.
Now lace my body
With twining arms
Close wrap thy form in mine;
And steep thee in love's
Imperial cup,
This cup alone divine.
I crush thee and clasp thee,
I drink thy lips
Hot rapture fills my groins,
Thou fount of my life,
Dream of my days,
Wife of my soul and loins.

"Beloved, I heard
Thee call to me,
Out in the shining light
And I found the rope
Thy woman's love
Had cast me in thy flight.
What is it draws me,
Draws me, draws me?
Up to thy rosy feet?
What is it thrills me,
Fills me, thrills me?
Thrills me with tremors sweet?
What is it lifts me,
Drifts me, lifts me?
Lifts me up to the light?

What is it binds me,
Zones me, twines me,
Binds me around with might?
'Tis the soul I've sought
Through death and hell
The woman part of me.
And he who doth find
His woman part
The soul of him is free.
Facet to facet
And flame to flame
Mirrored in each they stand
With the hidden source
Of love revealed
To holy fire fanned.
I clasp thee, crush thee,
Hold thee, fold thee,
Mate of my thund'rous soul.
And my pent-up love's
Joy jetting fount
Now finds its long-sought goal.

A FRAGMENT
THE SONG OF THE SOULS MEETING

Hast ever seen the dancing light of sun upon the leaves,
The jostling rays of light which steal beneath the shadowy eaves?
Hast ever seen the swallow from the nest, go to and fro,
Her mate to call when sunny shafts fell glist'ning there below?
Hast seen the burnished wing of dove stretch out beneath the sun
O'er crimson spur in drowsy mood e'er day's swift light was done:
Beneficent that joyous light and full of life and love
In-forming with a beauty new the wing of burnished dove?
Hast seen the kine at drowsy eve lift up their sun-lit eyes,
In wells of mute and untaught love their adoration lies:
They browse in silent deep content and drink the sun-rays in
And fragrant breath from dew-wet grass and sun-kissed clover win?
Hast seen the bee who drowses on the sun-fed shafts of light,
Enamoured of each radiant flower he wings his drowsy flight:
The fiery opaled humming-bird decks all his jewelled throat

With shafts of light, flame tipped with gold where beaming sun-rays float.
The scarlet painted oriole and azure-crested bird,
Around their forms from sun's white light these glowing colours gird?
Hast ever seen two drops of dew on swaying petals stand,
Petals swaying in the breeze of zephyrs gently fanned:
Hast marked how slowly they would turn each pearly drop to each
Then forth in sudden rush they'd glide the flowers' heart to reach;
And in that last glad flight they'd fuse and merge each drop in one
Pure limpid light reflecting then the rays of self-same sun?
So thou and I, Beloved One, will merge our flashing rays
In selfsame sun of God's great light, when on His form we gaze.
In selfsame robe girt then around, in honour-mantle clad,
We'll make that last great leap to Him in rush of spirit glad.

THE SONG OF THE FLAMING SOUL
A FRAGMENT FROM THE "HIDDEN WAY"

Leaping, dashing, falling, flashing, through the halls
of space,
Quiv'ring, floating, pealing, groping, blindly in their
race,
Hurtling, blazing, ringing, chasing, each o'er each
they fall,
Dashing forth in clamorous shout and answer to thy
call,
Come the sounds and words of fire from deep vibrat-
ing strands
Of God's celestial love-strung lyre 'neath my trem-
bling hands.
Soon the rhythm will grow stronger and the words
will fall
In rhythmic tread and stately measure answer to thy
call.
My limbs are filled with pulse of fire, my soul in rap-
ture glows,
My form of light, majestic waves of stellar radiance
throws
Afar upon the swooning air which silent sits in might,
In-harnessed are the winds of Earth, and plumed
and girt for flight;
And leashed are all the Titan forms who cast their
javelins wide
With lightning tipped; and stacked the spears which
hurl defiant pride—
Before this God-like crown of joy, Jehovah doth be-
stow

Their mighty crests of giant strength are bent in
homage low.
When dual soul is bound in one, then world of God on
high
Bends in its homage vast and deep, while host with
host doth vie,
To yield to Him the worship due, Who doth this joy
bestow,
And seraph's songs of victory won, fall echoing far
below.

I strike the lyre once again, forth tinkling on the air,
Sweet silver notes with golden tongue their vibrant
flutings share,
Swaying, swinging, gliding, ringing, melting in glad
sound,
A golden spout of melody from depths of love pro-
found,
Bursting in a sparkling show'r, like diamond drops
of dew
Meteors clad with rainbow-light, fall flashing into
view.
Each golden drop with liquid sound from brimming
cups o'erflow
And plash with sudden ring and chime, to lake of
love below.

THE SONG OF THE MORNING STAR

I climb the firmament of God a virgin vestaled bride
Clothed in the rad'ant light of morn to stand at my Love's side.
The rosy Dawn with fingers deft a gleaming veil hath spun
To garment me and mantle me, the "priestess of the Sun."
I come, I come, O glowing Sol now rend the shimm'ring veil
And shed thy burning flame upon my silver radiance pale:
With passioned haste I climb to thee my feet with wings are shod
With fiery zeal I seek with thee the altars of our God;
Then folded in thy beaming rays I kneel and cry to Him,
And wing my flaming words of song with thee and cherubim
Up to His veiled throne of might, in passioned spirit's cry
Of voiceless love and ecstacy, my trancèd soul doth fly.
Fold me to thy glowing breast Sun of love and light
Merge my being in the flood of thy great blazing might.
Steep my silver rays within thy glowing disc of fire,
Lace thy golden vesture with the threads of my desire,

Blend my pale white morning light into thy perfect day,
Love of Love and Soul of Soul baptize me with thy ray.
I hear the stars go singing on their happy stellar flight,
I only wait and climb to thee whose ray doth give me light.
I hear the moon sink whispering to heart of shining lake,
But I leap up to thee, O Love, my thirsting soul to slake,
And when upon thy breast I sink, in rapture deep I swoon,
And none but God doth know our joy, not even yon white moon,
When in the pale sweet light of morn I see thy glowing face,
My feet the paths of earth then scorn, I mount and fly apace
To lie in thy enfolding arm, to float upon thy breast,
In virgin slumber cradled there my soul at last shall rest.
O thou crowned and glorious One, thou wondrous Sun of light,
I know thy beauty, though thy face is veiled as yet from sight!
Yea, flash and break and beam upon my thirsting soul at dawn
In splintered rays, till all thy love in gems of light hath shone.

O diadem my form around with jewelled light and love
And twine my silver flame within thy dazzling rays above.
And shall I fear thee, O my King, thou disc of glowing light
And shrink before thy shining form when veil is rent from sight?
Nay, but my passioned soul shall turn in swifter flight to thee,
Vibrations then of mighty force shall wrench my spirit free,
And I and thou submerged in one shall swing upon our way,
I thy priestess, thou my Sun, throughout God's perfect day.
And who upon the earth shall know whence vestal star hath fled,
Perchance they'll deem her light is quenched or that perchance she sped
Affrighted down the steeps she climbed, hurled by a mighty force
To lower plane, because she dared to follow in thy course.
O dullards, shall I heed their cries when in thy flame I sink?
Their blinded, sodden, earth-grimed eyes, see not the silver link:
And only God shall know our joy, when on thy breast I swoon,

Nor other one the riddle solves, not even yon false moon:
Yet there, Beloved, each new day I'll blaze upon thy breast,
Submerged in thee, evolved again, love circled and at rest.

THE SONG OF THE HARVESTER

Fragment from "The Hidden Way"

Behold the feet of her who stands upon the mountain's side
How beautiful: in white arrayed like some celestial Bride.
Her feet like budding lilies glow in blossomed beauty there,
A perfume falls like incense sweet from myrtle braided hair;
Like pomegranates are her lips and she with love is clad
In robes of light; she hasteth now to meet the bridegroom glad.
"Come forth! my Love, my Bride, and glean the golden freighted field,
Come forth! and bind in lustrous sheaves the harvest's heavy yield.
Bind them around with supple withes and tendrils strong of love,
Come forth with joyous song and glean, with me, the heights above.
"Thou, God of God! and Light of Light! O Thou Majestic King,
Our welded souls unto Thy feet their joyous harvest bring;
The sheaves are bound around with light and hoops of white desire,
The molten blend of Luna's love and Sol's transmuted fire."

FRAGMENT
THE SONG OF THE WINE

Beloved one I flow to thee in purple draught of wine,
Quench all thy thirst, drink deep and long, O lave
thy soul in mine.
O steep thy parchèd lips within the golden flowing
bowl,
Its perfumed stream, which ceaseless flows with wine
shall make thee whole.
Spill not the rubied drops upon the blossom of thy
feet,
But guard with care the treasure of its perfume rare
and sweet.
Ah, fair and white the blossoms fall from that life-
giving vine,
But fairer far than bud or bloom is fruit when
crushed in wine.
Behold, my love now stands within her garden of
delight,
She gathers from the branching vine each bursting
bud in sight,
And presses them within her cup, she calleth me to
share
The sweet exuded wine of love our lips find hidden
there.
Her petalled feet shall tread anon, the towering
heights on high
And clustered grapes she'll gather there, where lake
of love doth lie.

LOVE TRIUMPHANT
"A DREAM"

I dreamed that I sculptured a goddess,
One weary and o'er wrought day,
And Love was the figure I moulded,
And the kneaded earth my clay;
And I shaped her large limbs freely
And girdled her form around,
Her flowing hair swept the heavens,
But her feet with gyves were bound.

Yet her mouth was filled with laughter,
Which flowed like waves of the sea,
While tears downfell from starry eyes:
She wept, that she was not free.
And her breasts were twin white mountains,
Her loins were zoned with the stars,
The crown which lay on her brow
Was shaped like the helm of Mars.

And forth from her palms outstretched
Sprang the jewelled buds of light
Which studded the "Heavens of Sorrow,"
And gleamed through each murky night.
But the tears which streamed from the portals,
Of her eyes, in jewels were wrought,
In diamonds and pearls were gathered:
With these, her freedom was bought.

Then I stooped and loosed her fetters,
When upward she sped with a cry
Of joy which rent the arches
Of the azure-vaulted sky.
The wings of her soul unfolded,
And spread like majestic bird,
The sound of her song triumphant
In the hush which followed was heard.

The ways of Heaven are mighty,
The wonders of earth supreme,
And the pinnacle where she stands
Was the zenith of my dream,
Where the wheels of life revolving
Grind the mills of earth below,
From the cup of her hand's deep hollow
Perennial love doth flow.

Where fiery planets circle,
And comets fly in their wake,
The Universe in that hollow
Of her hands, its thirst shall slake,
For there with unbound fetters
And her mighty wings unfurled,
Like a tender watchful mother,
She broods o'er the sleeping world.

THE CLOSED MILLS

(*The Song of the Bolsheviki—the Aftermath*)

There's a wonderful theory abroad,
A strange mad theory, that God
Hath closed His cosmic mills!

That the wheels have ceased to drive,
That the mill-race once alive
Lies stagnant and dead.

And the shuttered windows loom
In the eyes of those whose doom
Is written across the skies.

There is no God they sneer
We placed our beings here.
We *are* our God!

We'll put Jehovah to rout,
And turn the world about
And smash the barriers down.

The base, shall wear a crown,
The pure, we'll drag them down,
Defile them with our mud!

Oh, never on God we'll call,
Though we like vermin crawl
Across the face of the Earth.

The cosmic mills are closed,
And *our* will is super-imposed
Upon that workman, God.

THE AFTERMATH

But hark!
There's another theory to recall:
"*The mills of God grind slowly*
But they grind exceeding small."

So slowly they grind, one dreams
That the wheels no longer revolve
While man from *Love* and *Duty*
His mud-stained soul would absolve.

THE SPIRIT OF THE AGE

Behold I come on a Horse of Night,
On the lust of gold I feed,
Hatred and fear I disseminate,
I am the Spirit of Greed!
I rule with sceptre of iron strength
I beat the innocent down.
I climb to heights o'er writhing forms
And I grasp and wear a crown.
I defile the name of King and Priest
And I crawl beneath each robe,
In myriad forms I scatter death,
The hearts of the poor I probe.
In the seats of might I set my feet,
I garb myself with light,
I jeer aloud at the faith of God,
And the buds of youth I blight.
I am that one so long foretold,
I bear the mark of the beast,
The curse of Hate is great with child,
I gloat on the coming feast,
Where carrion crow will feed its fill
And hounds with a dripping jowl
Will sate their hunger and their thirst
In the carnage fierce and foul.
One form alone of majestic height
On earth or in heaven I fear
Who poureth forth such a flood of light
My burning eye-balls to sear,
That I fly before Her blazing wrath,
I cry on the Heavens above

To cover me and to hide me from
Her flame; 'tis the flame of Love.
Beneath that still white heat I dissolve
As dross doth melt in the fire,
And Hatred and Greed and Lust and War
Are consumed on self-same pyre.
I am the Spirit of Greed, I come
On a Horse of Darkest Night,
And only the flaming form of Love
Can slay or put me to flight.

THE VEILED SOUL

There is a thing within us, God alone knows what;
Intangible, invisible, with mystery wrought!
We seek to know and grasp it, but it doth elude
Our thought, our sight, our touch, our tears, yea, every mood.
We cry aloud, and kneel, and beat upon the wall
Of formless void, which doth this mystic thing enthrall.
We love, and with a sudden joy, we would enfold
Within our hearts this mystery, but from our hold
With swift, elusive step, it floats aside and we
Clasp in our arms the flesh, our senses only see.
We hold it fast; this warm sweet cloak of fleeting thing,
While round us still, its strange and subtle glamours cling
E'en while we rain caresses on those parted lips,
The lovely wraith within, with noiseless movement slips
Out through that crevice, and in silence draws apart,
To view from other world, the flame of leaping heart.
We seek to bind our love around, with chains of gold.
No chain hath e'er been wrought, which doth this one enfold.
With veiling garments closely drawn, sphinx-like it stands
Beyond the reach of touch, of stretched imploring hands.
Superb within its solitude and might divine
In reverence we learn, that we no right resign,

When from our frantic clasp, the soul doth draw aside
And *thine* and *mine*, are words the spirit doth deride,
Save, when two sundered halves are clasped again in one,
Zoned and circled by the links, they alone have spun.
O thing superb in voiceless might,—and sweet disdain,
I clasp thy fair, pale envelope; then shrink with pain,
Because I cannot hold thee close, and lip to lip,
Draw in thy depths most infinite, and daily sip
From some deep hidden spring of that eternal source,
Which floweth through thy cup in its celestial course.
Could I but once, then rend the veil of flesh aside
And see thy formless form, would I sink terrified
Before its awful beauty, and its wordless might—
Or would my seeing eyes be blasted of their sight?
Would I in maddened ecstacy, my body fling
Prostrate before the power of that unveilèd thing?—
Thy Soul, O Love, which on its own apex doth stand
A flaming torch of mystery beyond my hand!

THE WHITE ROSE

Oh, Love! I give thee a rose,
'Tis pale with a passion divine,
And e'er it lies on thy heart, Love,
It has wept out its tears on mine.

Tears of pain and of anguish
When its warm young life had fled,
Tears for the life that was over
Believing that Love was dead.

But when I stooped to lay it,
Wan with its vigil of pain,
In the grave of my buried passion,
It quickened to life again.

A nimbus of light now crowns it,
A garment of pure white flame,
And the rose of passion transmuted,
Its guerdon at last may claim.

Oh, Love! I give thee a rose,
'Twas God who gave it to me,
Transmuted at last I bring it,
My Life, My loved One, to thee!

LOVE'S CRY

O give me of thy love, but let it be,
A draft of life, rich in its infinity:
Nor time, nor change, nor chance
Can wreck nor blight
Nor dim its lustre, while the years take flight.

O steep thy soul in mine, till I and thee
Shall lose ourselves in love's wide shoreless sea.
Or let me drink from thy o'erflowing bowl
Till all thyself hath flowed into my soul.

Now draw me up until my lips shall cling
In raptured glory to that flaming thing,
Thy radiant Self, majestic in its might,
Then twain in one, we'll mount in godlike flight.

GOD'S FLOWERS

Golden Bowl of Earth and Heaven,
  Lips commingled twain in one,
Bounding heart with purest passion—
  Up-rush the life bloods of the sun.
God created—man enharboured,
  Swirling flash the germs of life,
Love-locked deeps now bear fruition,
  Flowering on the breast of wife.

Babe of love and light and beauty
  Dreaming on thy mother's breast:
Passion pure thy form hath moulded,
  Love-lips close on love-lips prest.
Nature breathes her purest passion
  When fires of Earth and Heav'n combine,
And the dross of lust is burned out
  In God's crucible divine.

TO
THE DWELLER IN THE FOREST

A Group of Nature Sonnets

1

O tired one, who, stretched upon the grass
  Pressing thy face, and eyes still wet with tears,
To Mother Earth: behold the night doth pass
  With hushed and tender footsteps, and appears
Far in the East, all panoplied with light
  An Orb of fire, which bursts the gates of Dawn,
His passioned zeal but hastes her trembling flight
  And flaming pageants in his train are drawn.
The Mighty Hunter with his fiery steeds
  Trumpets a blast upon the horn of Day.
All Earth responds, the orbèd Monarch leads
  And once again resumes his potent sway.
Heart-weary one of Earth, behold and see
How from before his face the shadows flee!

2

The eager Earth doth wake with melting sigh
  All veiled within a mist of happy tears.
Like Love-mate She; with lashes not yet dry
  Who kissed to gladness, laughs away her tears.
With joyous trills the birds break into song,
  The flowers sway and bend upon their stocks,
Each leaflet sings amidst the murm'ring throng,
  The shepherd rising leads afield his flocks.
Behold, O Soul, who peace from storm hath sought,
  Who from the fevered marts of man hath fled,

How each fair day this miracle is wrought
From fount of life the Universe is fed!
Here shalt thou drink from breast of Mother Earth
The white fire's stream, which gave thy flesh-form
birth.

3

Look how beneath thy feet a carpet thick
Of needle pines hath fallen sweet with myrrh,
And pungent scent doth in thy nostrils prick
When with thy feet, thou dost the needles stir.
The cones now stark upon the ground and still
Like Soldiers lie, on battlefield when slain
Once upright forms, all shrivelled sere and chill
Their duty filled, count neither loss nor gain.
The mighty Oak which stands apart from thee
A few short strides, and rears titanic crest
As sentinel hath stood, and from the lea
Hath caught the lash of wind full on his breast
O Soul, so weary of the earth-born din,
The peace of God flows only from within.

4

Thy cheek now pallid with the stress of pain
Lean down upon this bank of humid moss,
How cool and tender with the sweet of rain,
No fevered head could on such pillow toss,
But soothed to rest as if some holy hand
With mystic touch, had stilled the throbbing there
While soft slow-swaying ghostly zephyrs, fanned
By wind's thin breath, trail over brow and hair.

Perennial doth this mossy pillow lie
Upon the fair sweet bosom of the Earth—
The sons of men, unheeding pass it by
Whence flows such stream of new electric birth.
O fill thy cup, Belovèd, from God's fount,
'Tis stream of life, which through her breast doth mount.

5

Behold how straight the pale white nun flow'rs grow,
Some say that there the feet of Death have past,
And chill white death-flow'rs in the sod they sow
Where e'er his form its gloomy shadow cast.
Methinks they are the tears of such as thee
Who strive in battle with the flesh and sin;
Who seek for peace, but fettered still, nor free
Know naught of how the battle they shall win.
O lean thy face to earth and press thine ear
Close to the sward and hear the secret bliss
Of all that stirs within her womb, for dear
And tender was the flaming Sun's warm kiss.
The Cup of love, when by *pure* passion filled,
Gives potent peace, and pain forever stilled.

6

Beneath thine eyelids, how the slow tears well
And all thy face is furrowed by pale grief,
Because thou know'st not how thy pain to quell
And seek in darkness, for thy soul's relief.
O lift thine eyes unto the dawning Morn
Clad in her robes of mystic rose and white;

How in the arms of Night, in raptured swoon
She sheds to us the glory of her light:
Nor doth she shrink from his enfolding clasp
Nor toys with love, but there upon his breast
With sudden rapture, sinks within his grasp
In glad surrender to his bosom prest.
He *is* her lord, She *is* his light, they twain
Melt into one, nor from love's bliss refrain.

7

O look thy fill upon the Earth and see
How only man and beast their birthright sell.
How all with *light* informed, from *lust* is free
And he alone doth ring his Soul's sad knell.
The fountains murmur loud in sportive glee
When each to each ecstatic speed and fall
The great man-sinewed moss-engirdled tree
With branch entwined doth hold his mate in thrall.
Each clings to each with softly whispered sigh
Nor seeks to break the golden chain of fate;
Love thralls their feet: if wrenched apart they'd die
For love when pure draws only mate to mate.
O tired Soul, canst thou e'en yet not see
That *love*, not *lust* the Soul of man doth free.

8

For everything beneath the face of God
There is one mate, one only, glad and pure
Until that mate is found, *were all earth trod*
The pangs of hell, must soul of man endure.

O place upon thy breast that mandrake bloom
And learn how its long quest of love hath sped
How forth the pollen borne in night and gloom
O'er tarn and hill, the eager search hath sped.
On every side fair flow'rets beckoned him
And fluttered softly, sighed and wept and smiled:
His mate he sought—the light was blurred and dim
But from its path, the pollen unbeguiled
Sped on the search: At last in morass found
Their union sealed—'twas by love's glory crowned.

9

Hast ever seen the goss'mer wing of bee
Against the sky, in ardent am'rous flight
His rivals distanced he alone doth flee
Before the lash of love, his troth to plight?
Up, up into the ether of the sky
On flashing wing, the flight is lost to view:
Before his love, she loving still doth fly,
She seeks to prove his passion loyal and true.
And then, Ah me! within that nuptial bed
Of ether vast, a blue cerulean lake
Unseen of man, by God's hand upward led
The purple cup of royal love, they take.
And thrills of joy through nature's bosom run
E'er yet the wonder of that tryst is done.

10

Oh, dry the slow, sad tears from off thy face,
Thou tired one, now dwelling in the glade
Steep thy parched lips within the feathery lace
Of growing fern, and iris in the shade.

Upon thine eyelids press the myrtle's bloom,
Its balmy fingers cool the fiery pain,
As when the lamps of heaven dispel the gloom
And burning heat is quenched by cooling rain.
Stretch now thy weary frame upon the soil
And fill thy soul with mystic stream of might.
Learn thou, that on the unborn race recoil
The broken laws of God, of love, and light.
Within the forest glade on Nature's breast
Thou'lt find the law of love and light confest.

11

Hast ever heard the whispered song which flows,
A song of joy from young fair tender things
In smothered joyance 'neath the pallid snows
Its cadence soft, upwells and lilts and sings?
They sing of birth and love and life and light,
They sing of stately trees and swaying flow'rs,
Of bees and birds in their glad upward flight,
Of summer winds and golden sunclad hours.
They almost see the Yarrow standing straight
Like airy sprite upon the meadow green,
And Columbine now swaying by her mate
Enrobed within her crimson garments sheen.
Canst hear the note which thrills that unborn throng,
The note of love which builds them pure and strong?

12

Oh, feel the wet-drip falling on thy cheek,
A pallid mist of silver chaliced tears:
It is the dew of heav'n which earth doth seek
To purge her beauty e'er her love appears.

How still upon the grass, like mantle fair
With pearls inwrought and arabesques of light
Doth fall the mist and now shut in from glare
Of garish day, she doth perform her rite.
When morning dawns with love's new rapture thrilled,
Her trembling frame now wooed and won anew
To sudden beauty—all her being filled
Pulses again to him beneath the blue.
O dweller in the glade, Earth's litany
Lies ever there, behold and read and see.

13

Ah, stand and listen here within thy glade
When night hath fallen and the wind doth sleep.
When Darkness on the lips of Earth hath laid
His finger, pressing her to silence deep.
If thou wilt lay thine ear upon her breast
And silent lie, and harken with thy soul
Then shalt thou lose thine æons of unrest,
And all thy myriad lives shall from thee roll.
There deep within her breast lie peace and love,
And tranquil power and majesty serene,
The love-mate she of flaming lord above,
He is her lord and she his radiant queen.
Ah, few within the haunts of man can know
What perfect peace, from perfect love doth flow.

14

Didst ever steep thy parchèd lips within
The bubbling spring, which cool and limpid flows

Deep in the shade, where all its merry din
Doth strike the air, where silver birch tree grows.
Within that draught thou'lt find a bitter tang
Of root and shrub and blended rust and nail,
But, oh, the sweetness, slaking every pang!
For draught like this, what heights man's foot will scale!
And yet, O earth-born man, the draught of love
Long sought with tears and bitter tang of woe
Doth bring to earth the bliss of heav'n above
If once 'tis found and quaffed by twain below.
O rest thee now upon this bed of fern
And resting there, all earth's fair secrets learn.

15

Dost know that when the Winter berries glow
Like crimson jewels encased in em'rald green,
They are the gems and tokens he'd bestow
That hoary monarch on his pallid queen.
In circlet-rare, like drops of scarlet blood
Entwined they lie upon her ivory brow
O'er field and fen, o'er mountain tarn and flood
He weaves the wreath and on to her doth plough.
And when his queen in ermine mantle clad
Doth tremble 'neath the passion of his kiss
This diadem of rapture pure and glad
Is but one token of their new-found bliss.
Dost think there's aught unholy in God's plan?
Nay only where *lust lives, in haunts of man!*

16

O dweller in the forest here thy grief
Shall healèd be, and thy starved soul shall feed
Upon the Word which ever brings relief
To darkened ones, and blinded eyes which bleed
Sad tears of woe; distraught they seek the light
Where blinder men, still lead the groping blind
To gloomy realms, lost in the trough of night
And ever seeking, still no light they find.
Here 'neath the blue ethereal vault of heav'n
Thy tired soul may lift its eyes and see
Beneath the silent stars and moon at ev'n,
How all within the world of God is free.
Each one may find his one God-given mate
Or ever stand without Love's sealèd gate.

A SONG

A little bird loved a bee,
  How strange, how strange!
He swung on the bough of a tree
And he sang to that bumblebee,
  How strange, how strange!

The bumblebee loved a flow'r,
  Quite right, quite right.
And he spent each sun-laden hour
In the heart of that soft white flow'r.
  Quite right, quite right.

The little bird fled in a rage,
  How sad! how sad!
His passion he could not assuage,
'Tis the same though in every age,
  How sad! how sad!

The bee and the flow'r were wed,
  I'm glad, I'm glad;
They slept in a downy white bed,
Where the stars their radiance shed,
  I'm glad, I'm glad.

Love was the nectar they drank,
  Ah me! ah me!
And they dwelt on a green clad bank
Where the sun in jealousy sank,
  Ah me! ah me!

The little bird found a mate.
I alone, I alone!
Stand at love's shut-gate
As an exile there I wait,
I alone, I alone!

HIS CREED

Out of the mystic darkness,
I came from I know not where,
And I don't know how I'm headed—
Sometimes I'm damned if I care.

Out of the still white silence
Spun off from the Earth's great wheel,
Into the rush and madness—
I'd be a poltroon to squeal.

Into a seething cauldron
A city of lust and greed,
Festering with its passions
Avarice and gain, in the lead.

I try to be clean and decent,
To be honest and straight and true,
Though I don't know where I'm headed,
Yet, damn me, if I don't win through.

I'd scorn to hurt a woman,
To smirch her by word or deed,
For woman will save our manhood.
Sneer then, if you will, it's my creed.

She wears the one white garment
That we have fouled in the mud,
Then shielded ourselves like cowards.
By God! but we need the blood

Of a Christ, a thousand Christs,
To wipe out the craven stain
Of the lust that we call love—
God! but I blush with shame!

Is there a God in heaven,
A God in the mystic "Where"?
If He is the Church-prated monster,
I'm *damned* again if I care.

But I lay e're birth in a womb
Of a woman, a mother, a wife,
And drank from the fount of her love.
Look you! she gave me her life!

D'ye know what a mother's love is?
God, but her soul is white,
And every mother'd be shrined
If this mad world were right.

Every woman's a mother
At heart, though right be denied.
Maid and wife and spinster,
Yea, they are *all* sanctified.

And we like beasts and carrion
Drag them into the mud,
And the church laughs gaily with us,
Nay Christ, but we need thy blood.

Somewhere out in the darkness
Flaming with a great white light,

Hidden from our mole-like blindness
Sits a god who would blast our sight.

Could we look on her form majestic,
A woman-in-man, a God!
We'd call on the rocks to hide us,
We'd grovel and bite the sod.

Blindly we'll creep to Her knees,
Then look with amaze in Her face,
Tired and dusty and grimed
'Twill be just "Our Mother" and space.

The fight will be forgotten,
The pain, the struggle, the fret,
And the mad wild rush for pleasure,
And with tears on eyelids wet,

We'll just look into Her eyes,
Then lay our head on Her breast,
And, damn me, if I don't win through,
For the joy of that "Mother rest."

A FRAGMENT
SONG

Lilies ope' thy blossoms fair
Swaying on thine emerald stalks,
With perfume rare
Fill thou the air,
Where with petalled feet she walks.

Not her earth-form now I see
But her soul which leaps to me,
With lovely laugh,
The cup to quaff,
Buds to gather from the "Tree."

Bursting buds; with happy laugh
Flowing purple wine to quaff
'Neath "tree of life,"
Is hid from strife
Chaliced cup of joy to quaff.

Clustered grapes of joy to crush
Forth in rubied streams they gush,
With purple light
In joyous flight
To her petalled feet they rush.

Myrtle-braided is her hair:
Spirit bathed in perfumes rare,
O glad delight,
Now plumed for flight,
See the mystic cup is there!

O thou bud of sweet delight
Haste thee, haste thee in thy flight:
The veil grows thin,
O haste within
To gardens lit with love and light.

Pulsing flame of whitest fire
Ever up, aspire, aspire,
Thy flame and mine
On wings divine
Soars to hidden sphere yet higher.

Bathed in living stream of light
Upward, upward still our flight,
Till at His feet
In passion sweet,
Dazzling glory blinds our sight.

AN INTERLUDE

Bud of sweet delight,
  Thy soul and mine
On selfsame stalk
  Now grow and twine;
Thy blossom white
  Now folds my heart
Secure within,
  Of thee a part.

Pearling drop of dew
  Thy prism bright,
A mirror is
  For my glad sight:
Reflected there,
  Myself I see
Thy face upturns
  Its light to me.

Lily white and fair,
  Thy blossomed soul,
Upon my breast
  Hath found its goal.
O sceptred one,
  Enthroned there,
A reign of love
  With me thou'lt share.

Rubied gem of light
  Thy dazzling fire
In purple shafts
  With mine aspire:

Which flaming glow
In living light
And round thee throw
A garment white.

Bud of sweet delight,
Thou glowing pearl,
Around thy sphere
My tendrils curl,
In shafts of flame
They leap and twine,
Till radiant sphere
Is fused in mine.

Gem of earth and heav'n,
Thou pearl of God
Thy lonely way
At length is trod:
For thou and I
Flame now in one
Glad glowing sphere,
The quest is done.

MATURITY

What is a woman's soul, O God—a deep reflex of
Thine,
Touched with thy flaming finger tip and sealed with
Thy mark divine?
E'en when she falls to lowest depths and bathes her-
self in sin,
E'en then the spark divine unquenched, glows ever
on within.
Blackened, smirched and all defaced the citadel yet
stands,
And only God can see the spark that flamed forth
from His hands.
Ah, strange and complex is the soul deep hid in
woman's breast,
Like leaping sea 'tis ever filled with storm and sad
unrest;
Because her spirit fine doth move to every passing
wind,
And tendrils of her heart must be, round something
ever twined.
But oft the beauty of her love will hide some leprous
thing
And o'er some soul distorted growth, a tender
glamour fling.
God heeds not all the sad mistakes of Life, when
tempest tost,
But from the mire doth pluck the bud, which man
would deem well lost,

He breathes upon the stainèd leaves and fills the heart with dew
Which parched with drought had turned aside when mirage fell in view.

Ah, God is *just* where man is cruel. He knows the soul's own pain
Which fainting on the desert falls, clear fountains sought in vain.
O, mad and base illusion that drives man to smirch the fame
Of that fair soul, the woman-soul who dual part doth claim.
God made not man himself complete, nay only shall he stand
Attuned to perfect God-hood, when the dual soul is spanned.

Can body move along through earth when maimed and cut in twain?
Then neither moves the Spirit on till soul clasps soul again.
'Twas not from petty mind of man the thought of man evolved,
But from the mighty soul of Him, who heaven holds enthralled.
Each star He circled to its place and holds it ever there
A drop within His universe which doth His glory share,

And from His deep unfathomed soul of God-hood
and of love
The image which He made complete to dwell with
Him above
No flaw can have, nor knowledge lack, when sifted
by His hand,
The twain-in-one, the dual-soul before Him then
shall stand
Supernal in its majesty and crowned 'neath tree of
life,
The twain-in-one, the fire-soul and love-encircled
wife;
And thus when man with wanton touch defiles the
woman's soul
Himself defiles and doth retard his progress to that
goal.

THE NEW SONG OF A NEW CYCLE

And the Earth rose up and chaunted
A song that was new and divine:
She sang of a wonderful life
Hid deep in the Valley of Time,
Of days when men would be brothers,
When Love would come into her own:
And the world would be filled with laughter
With never the sound of a moan.
She sang of a new sweet cycle
Sweeping up through the vale of tears
With face of purified angel
And spirit all purged of her fears,
Who'll gather men to her bosom,
And teach them the "New Song" of love,
And feed their souls with contentment
The manna which falls from above.

Then none shall barter his soul for gain,
Nor the lust of that gold which kills
And the new sweet sound of laughter,
Shall be heard again on the hills.
And the burning beauty of God,
Shall leaven the heart of each man
While the flame of His spirit upblazing
Their own still flames shall fan.
Till the self is cleansed and shriven,
And the goal for which men shall strive
Will be neither place nor power,
And not one the other shall drive.
Each purified face shall mirror

The lustre of God from above—
The home of a shriven spirit,
And a heart that is steeped in love—
This is the goal they will strive for
In the new glad days yet to come
When the rule of flesh is ended
And the reign of spirit begun.

THE VERY GOD OF VERY GOD

In the depths of Time's abyss
E'er womb of Ether conceived
E'er the breath of life was stirred
Or the joy of birth achieved,
Where Silence crouched in anguish
And sweltering darkness swam,
Forth from the void of ether,
Sprang the Soul of the Great I Am.

Himself that swelt'ring darkness,
And He, that Abyss of Time,
And His the cry of anguish,
When He rent that womb sublime.
Born of Himself, and in Him
Then arose that Primal Force,
Which loosed the bonds of ether
As it burst from th' Eternal Source.

The mighty shroud of darkness
Shook with a spasm of pain:
The great deep void of chaos
Then flashed into fiery flame;
And Silence crouched in anguish
Broke into a god-like cry
Which echoed through the spaces
Where the fields cerulean lie.

In throes of birth convulsive
Then up from deep ether welled

A flood of seething liquid,
By His God-like law 'twas held.
From a womb of chaos emerged,
The Creator of Heaven and Earth,
Eternity zoned His loins
And the breadth of His mighty girth.

His hands engulfed the spaces,
And kneaded each form like dough,
His breath like a whirling wind,
Went searching, both high and low.
His voice as a thousand trumpets
Rang out o'er the walls of night
And shook their deep foundations
Till the darkness was merged in light.

Who can speak of His glory?
Or who can describe His face?
His magnitude and His Power
Which fill all the domes of space?
Were Earth a shape Titanic
Studded with a million eyes,
The driving clouds a vesture,
And the floods but a deep disguise;

Were mountain tops but pillars
Which held this Titan aloft,
The valleys a cup from which
His daily nectar was quaffed,
Then *man* might grasp this wonder—
The might of a giant form,

Who hurled the bolts of thunder,
As he rode on the flying storm.

But He who is the birth-form,
Of the *Universe* crashed in one,
Who sheds his bright effulgence,
Through the eye of blazing Sun
Each finite mind must falter
When shaping that marv'lous Soul,
The cosmic world *His* vesture
While His hands engulf the whole.

A God of Might Majestic
And a God of love divine,
Who rent Himself asunder,
And gave us the Christ sublime!
How long shall He forgotten
Yearn over each wand'ring soul?
Who's might, each birth encompassed
And whose *hands* engulf the whole.

THE DREAM FACE

Fragment from "The Hidden Way"

Beloved, thou hast seen the face, which bends o'er sleeping babe,
When soft within its downy nest the fretful child is laid,
With trembling lip half sobbing still and eyes dew drenched with rain
Of tears, which fall o'er rounded cheek, still flushed with childish pain:
Thou'st seen the face of her who bends above the sleeping one
Lit by a radiance pure and soft like rays from veilèd sun,
She leans and soothes the weary child with touch divine and sweet,
'Neath which the tumult of his heart beats vanquished swift retreat:
And all the incense of her soul infolds each drowsing limb,
Till soon the dreaming child is lost in clouds of fragrance dim;
But deep within these odours and from out that dream-lit space,
The tired babe looks back to see the mother's tender face.

"*Lullaby*"

"Sleep softly, my beloved one, O rest thee in mine arms,
Let not thy soul be troubled now by any rude alarms.

O press the flower of thy face close to my brooding heart,
The stalk which bore thy blossomed bud is of thyself a part.
On waves of my love's ocean then swing softly to and fro,
Lulled gently by the ripples and the murmur of its flow.
O rest thee in the cradle of my nested arms which hold
Thy swaying bud of fragrant life, whose petals all unfold.
Out on the sea of dreaming sleep now let thy glad barque fly,
No storm shall wreck thy vessel, Love, while I the helm ply;
And through the maze of wanderings where lies the golden land,
I'll guide thy dreaming footsteps still and hold thy tender hand:
And there beneath the rainbow thou shalt find that mine of gold,
As vast as my love's ocean which doth all thy soul enfold."

PASSION AND REBIRTH

Hot within my heart raged the loosened dogs of hell,
While my blood like molten fire raced within my veins.
My eyes were scorched as with white flames—God were they tears?
I sprang upon my Arab steed, and flung to her the reins.

Her hoofs swept o'er the earth in wild and thunderous beat.
Like hiss of falling sword, the wind swept past my cheek.
But faster o'er the desert, raged within my heart
The dogs of hell: and hate, rose up with sudden shriek.

Allah, Allah, hear my prayer, give me strength to kill
That hated one, who hath bereft with mighty wrench,
From sleeping arms,—"my Soul's desire,"—O give me strength,
To steep my hands within his blood: my hate to quench.

O'er threshold of my tent, he stole with silent feet,
With swift and noiseless jerk, the thongs were round me fast,
With tearless moan, from out my arms, my bride was wrenched,
And o'er my head, the stifling folds of burnouse cast.

I've lived and slept, and lived, a thousand thousand
years.
Nations have failed from earth, and left no name
nor trace,
Yet never in my heart, nor in each coursing vein
Hath stillèd been, the tumult of that fearful
race.

With ghastly strength I burst the bonds which cut
my flesh,
The blood leaped out and gushed from lacerated
limbs,
My eyes were shot with scorching pains; God were
they tears?
And in my heart the dogs of hell raced with the
winds.

Allah! hear me while I pray; Slake this hellish
thirst
With crimson fount of blood, in desert of my
hate.
Nay let the curse rebound on me to endless day,
But give my lance new strength, nor grant it be
too late.

And Allah heard: my steed was shod with wings of
might—
My lance with swift exultant shriek launched in
his side.
But he, O curse him! Curse him! slew my "Soul's
Desire."
And spilled her blood e'er he himself had died.

The very rocks upheaved with pain, the shudd'ring earth,
Went sliding from my feet, while spasms of mad fears
Shook the Arab steed, drove her snorting o'er the plains,
My eyes were scorched, as with hot fires,—God were they tears?

Thou knowest the heart, O Mighty One! What matters name?
Allah, Buddha, Thoth or God, Thou who rul'st on high,
O still the riot in my soul and quench this pain.
Which doth e'en yet rise up and wring my heart and cry

In ceaseless tumult still, my soul doth writhe in tears,
O quench the scorching flame; pour ashes on the fire
After these weary years, if 'tis Thy will, O give
Again, the guiding light of my own Soul's Desire.

Music. Mendelssohn's Songs Without Words
No. 17 Op. 38 Agitato

THE BATTLE OF LOVE AND DEATH

The wars of the Earth are mighty
  But they pale like a ghostly wraith
'Neath shout and thunder of battle
  That is waged between Love and Death.

When Death from the entrails of Hate
  Sprang to life with a mighty bound
He, suckled on blood of vanquished,
  Full-fledged, matured and crowned;
(Yea crowned with daggers of envy
  In a mantle of midnight hue,
The stars of heaven a third
  In his smouldering track he drew)—
Belched forth from his gaping maw
  (For it dripped with a fœtid gore)
A challenge to fearful battle
  Which rang out from shore to shore.

Then Love stepped down from her Kingdom
  And caught up the challenge of Death
Though she reeled and paled with horror
  'Neath the blast of his noisome breath.
She, clothed around in the garments
  Of a radiant and blazing Sun,
Stepped down in terrible beauty:
  Man's soul the prize to be won;
In garments of glory blazing
  With visage both awful and sweet
On her brow the planets of Heaven
  And the pallid moon at her feet.

Two pinions vast as of eagle
Sprang forth at her word of command
And bore her beyond the vapours
Which Death with his foul-breathing fanned.
Then rang forth a sudden clamour
And clashed their fierce swords in mid-air
While the mighty hosts of heaven
Were arrayed in majesty there.
From the brow of Love went streaming
Such a silver radiance bright
To strike down the fierce black tyrant
To blast and shrivel his sight.

Then forth with a cry of thunder
And a hideous wail of pain
Death launched out his fearful weapons
'Midst a deluge of fiery rain.
And he scorched the plains and meadows
And awoke both Famine and Sin
While Pestilence rose in menace,
And her cry was heard through the din.
They rent the burning volcanoes
And they snatched up the boiling flood
And poured forth the molten liquid
Like a gleaming torrent of blood.

And they hurled the bolts of lightning
Which broke with the thunders of doom
Flashing o'er terrible spaces
In a hail of fiery spume.
They crashed into each like Met'ors,
Then they sprang back again to breathe;

The shudd'ring gasp of their breathing
Caused the Earth's foundations to heave.
Then Death belched forth in malice
A flood, overwhelming the world
And man killed man, in madness
Where the bolts of his hate were hurled.

But Love leaning down, now caught up
In a torrent of tender desire
The soul of man who had spurned her
And she sealed him to her with fire.
That flame of her seal is branded
Deep down in the depths of his soul
Though blinded by Death he wots not
Yet staggers still on to her goal —
Weeping, some day he will find her,
Repenting he'll fall at her feet
And plead for her dear forgiveness
And the *crown* that makes life complete.

THE GOD OF WAR

There's a form as black as midnight
  Stands astride the gulf of Time
His bulk is vast and fearful,
  And his hands are steeped in crime.
His crown is formed of daggers,
  Shaped upon his anvil black:
And studded close with embers,
  That fall smouldering in his track.

And he wields a mighty weapon,
  'Tis a two-edged sword of steel
'Neath blows which cleave asunder
  All his cow'ring subjects reel;
Like monstrous bat his mantle
  Streams upon the wind afar,
And gloom fills all his kingdom,
  Never pierced by gleam of star.

When he whirls his sword in menace,
  Till red-hot it ploughs the land,
Then only God can smite him,
  Or withstay his fearful hand.
When kings of earth in battle,
  Sate the "maw of Death" with blood,
He bursts in sombre laughter,
  And exultant fords the flood.

Then his knees are stained with scarlet,
  And his hands are red with gore,

His mantle black is spattered,
Where it sweeps 'neath Heav'n's floor.
Who is this mighty tyrant?
Whose gullet is filled with wine,
Of blood and tears and wailing
While human bones are his shrine?

'Tis War, that hideous monster,
Evolved from the lust of hate
Matured he sprang to power,
Usurping a vast estate;
The power which he dethroned
Was the shining form of Love,
From the brain of man he sprang,
To usurp her place above.

THE SONG OF THE LARK

Oh, the grass is growing,
And the wind is blowing,
  And the river flows out to the sea,
While I float o'er the world
With pinions unfurled
  And sing of my love and thee.

Oh, the trees are sighing,
And the clouds are flying,
  And the sun is climbing the sky,
And my little bird-love
Who is singing above
  Calls to me from on high.

And I rise, I arise
To the vault of the skies
  Afloat upon tremulous ether,
To my birdling I come
As she soars to the sun
  With all the world beneath her.

No mortal in sight
In the pale morning light
  When I sing my matutinal song,
For the world is asleep
As it lies at my feet,
  And stilled are the human throng.

I only awake
With my little bird mate,
  And our notes are a-thrill with praise

For the sun and the shade,
Which Jehovah hath made,
And the glory of His ways.

Alone, quite alone,
Almost up to God's throne,
We float on the palpitating air,
And with passionate note
From each joyous bird-throat
We fling out our morning prayer.

THE WITCH OF THE NORTH

Truculent, turbulent bitter north,
Crash of the ice-block storm.
What is the prize which lures our hearts
To the feet of that shrouded form;
Ever retreating, advancing, receding,
Luring us on to the light
Till tortured we fall in the grip of death,
Entombed in cimmerian night?

Lashed by the whip of the driving wind
Eyelids seared as by fire.
Bursting in spume, the snow drives on,
Till our heart-strings, taut as a lyre,
Twang forth in a muffled sibilant breath
A sob, a cry of despair,
And stumbling, we drag our haggard forms
To the mouth of the "White Witch" lair.

Truculent, turbulent bitter north
Balked of thy long-sought prey;
Crooning and cradling us in her arms
The White Witch bears us away.
Through the flying spume and crashing floe,
Into the welkin's blue;
And there close prest, to her frozen breast
The goal we have sought lies in view.

Up to the ice-peak's shimmering gleam
We lift our snow-blinded eyes,

And, lo! in the wake of the glowing sun
The gate of our pathway lies.
'Tis the wide white gate of Death we see
Not the mystic "Pole" in the blue.
We laugh and tremble and die on her breast
For the White Witch carries us through.

LOVE'S CROWN

Oh, sceptred one, and lord of my whole life,
At last I cling in rapture to thy side
Enfolded in like Eve the primal wife
And second Adam by Love deified.
No longer twain, but one 'neath selfsame shroud
Of light, our garment now no robe of shame
To hide our nakedness—erect and proud
Before the hidden throne our crown we claim.
Hadst thou not found me, O thou lordliest one,
And manacled my questing soul to thee
In truth, the Earth asunder from the Sun
Had burst in torment to the belching Sea.
With finger now on lip doth Nature scan
The distance far for coming God—in man.

L'ENVOI

'Tis only lust that creeps and hides
'Tis only lust that kills,
'Tis Love alone that sanctifies
And soul and spirit thrills.
'Tis lust that skulks and hides behind
A fair and outward show
And round the dazzled moth doth seek
A glamoured light to throw.
'Tis Love that hastes to diadem,
The woman-soul when found
And as a sceptred *wife* is she
In zone of *light* inbound.

Yet there are those who call them wives,
Have filched the crown of light
And built their stolen Kingdom on
A base of blackest night.
Filched for greed of place and pow'r
For that which they might win,
And they the honour-mantle wear
And bind their partner in
A web of sin, a stygian pool:—
To eyes unveiled, they lie
As festering sores, and larvæ creep
Where greed with lust doth vie.

'Tis Love that lifts the flower up
When beaten to the ground,
'Tis Love that seeks to strengthen her,
When woman-soul is found.

'Tis seeking-love which ever cries
"Appear—O Heart appear,
Thy soul-blind lord, once reft from thee
Is ever waiting here."
And when the Earth shall learn again
The "Song of Songs" anew
Then forth the angel-crowned shall leap
His dazzling form in view.
As lustrous star, the "twain in one,"
Is zoned around with light;
Then torn from base to base shall be
The "KINGDOM OF THE NIGHT."

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